

# Back on Her Feet and Back to Her Active Lifestyle

Sam Kennedy

BETHLEHEM - Jackie Bauer of Walnutport, a mom to four athletic sons, has always lived life in motion. A runner since age 20, she carved out time daily to log 5 to 6 miles, either on her treadmill or along the scenic D&L Slatington Trail near her home.

But in October 2024, persistent hip pain began to slow her stride. She turned to a local health system, where she was diagnosed with bursitis and received a cortisone injection. The treatment offered only brief relief. "After that, I could run maybe a mile, and that was it," she recalled. For someone used to long daily runs, the limitation was deeply frustrating.

As her pain worsened, imaging revealed a hip labral tear. Physical therapy was prescribed, but her condition deteriorated. Walking became a struggle. She needed her hands to lift her leg and found stairs nearly impossible. "I felt like a 90-year-old woman," Jackie said. "My pain was a nine out of ten every day. Ibuprofen helped a little, but it upset my stomach."

Determined to find answers, Jackie pursued further care, including pain management where she was diagnosed with sciatica and given another cortisone injection. But the message was clear: "How's your hip? You have to get it fixed." Eventually, a joint replacement specialist in Philadelphia referred her to Dr. Ajay Kanakamedala of St. Luke's Orthopedic Care.

"We call it hip-spine syndrome," Dr. Kanakamedala said. "We see it all the time. The hip and the back are just so connected that if your hip is hurting, you change the way you walk. You change your posture. It affects your back, or vice versa."

"I think that's part of why maybe people weren't convinced, because she had back issues, that anything was coming from her hip. Her back issues did get better once she had a back injection, but it didn't fix the hip."

Jackie appreciated Dr. Kanakamedala's thorough approach. "He went over everything with me," she said. "He recommended physical therapy first to help me get stronger and confirm the pain was coming from my hip." His expertise in orthopedic sports medicine gave her hope.


On August 6, 2025, Dr. Kanakamedala performed an arthroscopic labral repair and femoral osteoplasty, a minimally invasive procedure to relieve pain, restore movement and prevent further joint damage.

Jackie began her recovery at Physical Therapy at St. Luke's in Lehigh, focusing on rebuilding strength and mobility. She completed her final session on October 8.


"Jackie was a model patient, highly motivated and consistently compliant with both her rehab treatments and home exercise program," says Tiven Teno, PT. "She progressed rapidly through a regimen designed to restore full range of motion and hip strength. Throughout her treatment, she experienced no pain and advanced quickly, allowing her to return to her active lifestyle with confidence."

Today, Jackie is back to walking and cycling the trail she loves. While she hasn't resumed running yet, she's optimistic. "I'm just glad to be able to do everyday things without pain," she said. Even sleeping is restful again.

Reflecting on her journey, Jackie shared, "Dr. Kanakamedala was a godsend. He gave me back my life. He told me I'd get to 75 or 80%, but I feel 100%. I just can't believe how good I feel."

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